

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, March 8, 1:30 p.m., Rm. 113,
First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street,
Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jon Carlson, Gene Carroll, Dick Esseks, Gerry Krieser, Roger Larson, Mary Strand, Lynn Sunderman and Tommy Taylor

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mike Piernicky of Olsson Associates; Kent Morgan, Mike DeKalb, Steve Henrichsen, David Cary and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department; Roger Figard, Randy Hoskins, Mike Brienzo, Virendra Singh and Roger Ohlrich of Public Works & Utilities; Jonathan Cook and Patte Newman of the City Council

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: **Narrow Traffic Model Scenarios to 3 Alternatives**

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

Randy Hoskins stated that today's presentation will consist of an overview of the current Long Range Transportation Plan situation, where we are going, and a refresher on how the traffic model has gotten us to the point where we are now. Then the remainder of the presentation will be looking to the future and how to deal with the traffic of the future.

Kent Morgan began his PowerPoint presentation by stating that he will present information on how we got where we are today in terms of the development of the current Comprehensive Plan. He presented a map of the 2025 future street plan. The important thing to remember is that the transportation network should support the land use. The existing transportation network involves all levels of government. There are several types of projects including new roadways, street widening, bridges, interchanges, intersection studies, corridor preservation and future right-of-way.

The charge of the Commission is to update the existing Comp Plan and Long Range Transportation Plan. To do this, it is useful to understand how Lincoln's current street and highway plan came to be. Transportation planning is based on the historical grid system concept of mile sections and grid lines. The major planning focus in the 1990's was based on interior streets, Antelope Valley, the South and East Beltways and I-80 widening.

The Congestion Management Task Force was formed in the late 1990's, and they recommended a 2+1 turn lane system. One of the key assumptions made during preparation of the last Comp Plan was to increase the growth rate to 1.5%. This challenged us to find ways to expand utilities, the street system and community

services. Several key transportation decisions were settled including the interior 2+1 system, Antelope Valley, and the South and East Beltways.

They also looked at various improvements that could be made. They considered several alternatives and the level of service. They wanted to ensure they were accommodating growth, so they secured right-of-way in advance of development. Rural-urban transitional streets (RUTS) was also implemented. Financing considerations for street improvements totaled \$1,482 million. There was a deficit so they pursued funding and cost savings methods. They recognized growth and development while at the same time realizing there were existing neighborhoods and a built environment and that they need to accommodate mobility needs with the available fiscal resources.

In terms of where we go from here, several projects are underway. Phase I of Antelope Valley is underway and the South and East Beltways have begun. We need to continue to acquire right-of-way for future improvements and pursue the RUTS program to make efficient use of road funds. The 2+1 road system remains a part of the current Comp Plan and Long Range Transportation Plan.

In terms of funding, there is a degree of uncertainty still. For the first time ever, we are using highway allocation bonds. There has been an increase in wheel tax revenues. Street impact fees are also in place.

The task ahead is a balancing act. We must start with the adopted street plan, respect commitments already made, acknowledge the need for future streets and highway improvements, factor in fiscal considerations and consider the land use plan's role in transportation planning.

Morgan concluded by asking if there were any questions.

Figard reminded the Commission that it is important to take the information that we receive from the land use and traffic model and determine what to do with that information. He wants to challenge the group to find other solutions. Part of the job is to get information to the public. In the final analysis, setting priorities and the cost of projects will decide where we get the most advantage from the dollars spent. We will hear a lot about fiscal constraints, but we need to think outside the box.

Esseks asked if the Commission will be provided with fiscal constraints, because he feels that if we reach for the stars and it is unattainable, that will not help in the decision-making process. Figard stated that we can talk about finances in the big picture, so as not to waste time and effort. Hoskins noted that staff will provide financial information further along in the process.

Next, Piernicky began a PowerPoint presentation and provided a summary of information of the model process. The 2004 model was approved by the Officials Committee on February 2. Currently we are in Phase II. The 3 alternatives include the

2004 network (no-build), the 2025 comp plan network and the 2030 network.

In the 2004 model, there were 1.478 million trips per day and with the 2030 model it will become 2.396 million trips per day. In 2004, there were 25,488 non-auto trips/day and is projected to be 40,478 person trips/day. In 2004, there were 910,591 vehicle trips by purpose and is projected to be 1.481 million in 2030.

In the 2004 model, the average trip time is 7.9 minutes with the network, and if we do nothing the average trip would be 29.8 minutes. With the 2025 network, the average trip time would be 15.9 minutes and with the 2030 network it would be 16.3 minutes.

Esseks asked why the trip time has increased by almost 100%. Piernicky stated that as you start to see the added delay, it isn't linear; it becomes more exponential in nature. Hoskins added that the road network is not keeping up with the growth of trips. Piernicky stated that as you increase the land mass, trip times will increase. Esseks asked what will happen if we lose that quality. Piernicky stated that is a big question worth looking at, and he does not know how the community will respond to that. Hoskins stated that it is a quality of life issue and your frame of reference.

Sunderman stated that there are several streets at level service F and asked staff to provide examples. Piernicky noted that 27th Street from O to Havelock and O Street from 27th to 40th are good examples.

Hoskins stated that level of service C is the cutoff point for discussion. The City has used level of service C for planning purposes. Level C is a reasonable expectation and is attainable for the future.

Maps of the three alternatives were distributed. The maps included where we are now, the 2030 land use on the 2004 network (no-build), the existing plan with the 2030 land use, and the 2030 plan.

A map of the 2+1 concept was distributed. Hoskins asked the group if they would like to continue with this system. Strand stated that if we see the trip times go up, that is not helping. If we leave it at 2+1 and don't look at other options, we are not doing our jobs. If traffic and population increase, that will not help. Carlson noted that this concept is not being proposed for the major streets.

Strand stated that for the main arterials, we need to look at other options. She feels we need to look at each individual street. Carlson stated that we need to look at 2+1 and 4+1 and the advantages of each. Larson stated that we need to look at connection from the population centers to the employment centers. Esseks believes that we have two objectives, which are moving traffic and supporting existing land uses. He feels that the interior neighborhoods are healthy and he does not want to do anything to hurt them.

Hoskins explained that the question is to decide if we want to continue the 2+1 system as the base.

Strand stated that she believes we should continue with the 2+1 system but if a particular street is at service level F, then we need to look at other alternatives.

Larson stated that the planning on the exterior has been excellent, but we still need to plan for the interior. He also believes that we need to look at transportation from the population centers to the employment center and the cost associated with that.

Strand noted that it is very difficult to get from southeast Lincoln to northwest Lincoln.

Hoskins stated if we determine that it is a priority to widen a particular street, we need to purchase the properties as they become for sale, and then in 30 years, the City could own a substantial portion of that street. So if we look at the long-term vision, we can accomplish a lot.

Esseks commented that perhaps it is not possible to reach a resolution today. He feels it is wrong to look at one objective. He feels we need to look at many objectives. He does not feel we need to sacrifice the neighborhoods to attain one objective, which is to lessen traffic congestion.

Figard stated that if the concept of 2+1 continues to preserve the integrity of the built environment and neighborhoods, and we build bigger roads on the exterior, then we need to challenge staff to find solutions within that philosophy. Carlson stated that he agrees with Figard's philosophy.

Carroll noted that some of the interior streets may change because of what we do on the edge, but we don't know that yet. So he believes we should stay with the base, work on the edge, and we may have to revisit it later.

The Commissioners generally agreed to continue with the 2+1 system.

The group recessed at 3:15 p.m., reconvening at 3:35 p.m.

Hoskins began by looking at the 2030 continuing growth base network. There were a number of assumptions that went into the 2025 plan. However, they scaled things back based on the current funding scenario. It still provides paved streets within the land use plan, but they are 2+1 streets instead of 4+1. The 6 lane streets have also been removed from the 2030 plan. The Commissioners affirmed the policy of acquiring right-of-way regardless of whether we have the money to build the roads.

On the 2030 network model, roughly one-quarter of the streets on the map are worse than service level C.

Hoskins began the process of narrowing the street improvement networks to three alternatives. They will look at other considerations and then choose one alternative in May.

The following improvements to model were proposed by the Commissioners:

No.	Street	Limits	Improvement	Notes
1	84 th St.	O to Hwy. 6	6 lanes	
2	98 th St.	Pine Lake to Adams	4+1	
3	Hwy. 2	Van Dorn to Old Cheney	6 lanes	
4	Hwy. 2	Old Cheney to E. Beltway	6 lanes	
5	Hwy. 2	Van Dorn to Old Cheney	Grade Separations	With No. 1&2
6	O St.	84 th to E. Beltway	4+1	
7	Pine Lake Rd.	84 th to E. Beltway	4+1	
8	Pioneers Blvd.	84 th to E. Beltway	4+1	
9	Superior St.	I-180 to Cornhusker	6	

Figard stated that direction from administration has been strong in that they believe in the built environment and the 2+1 concept. His direction to staff is to try to find solutions and alternatives which value that belief.

Strand believes that we still need to look at 27th Street and see if there are any improvements in the level of service and any effects on the built environment.

Hoskins explained that there have been nine proposed improvements presented. Staff will group these into three or four networks to model and will present those networks at tomorrow's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Abendroth
Planning Department